
[As of: 30 September 2014]

Chapter 0

The Army Ethic

The Heart of the Army

This We'll Defend

SECTION I –INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE ARMY ETHIC

- 0-1. The Army Ethic is the heart of the Army and the inspiration for our shared professional identity – *Who We Are – Why and How We Serve*. It motivates our conduct as Army Professionals, Soldiers and Army Civilians, who are bound together in our common moral purpose to support and defend the Constitution and the American people.
- 0-2. The Army Ethic explains the nature of Honorable Service in accomplishment of the mission and performance of Duty. It guides the Army Profession in the *ethical* design, generation, support, and application of landpower. It establishes the standard and expectation for all to serve as Stewards of the Army Profession, caring for the people and resources entrusted to us by the American people.
- 0-3. It is expressed in our moral principles, Army Values, oaths and creeds, laws and regulations, and customs, courtesies, and traditions – all embedded within the Army culture of Trust.

WHY IS THE ARMY ETHIC IMPORTANT

- 0-4. A doctrinal ethic is critical for the Army Profession: it provides the moral basis for why our Army exists; it explains the origins of our moral heritage and traditions; and it emphasizes the imperative of being an honorable leader, follower, and steward of Trust with the American people.
- 0-5. Within the Army Profession, we earn and reinforce Trust among Soldiers, Army Civilians, and the Army Family by living the Army Ethic and consistently demonstrating our Character, Competence, and Commitment.
- 0-6. As volunteer Soldiers and Army Civilians, we reflect our diverse society. This is our strength. At the same time, Trust requires that all of us live by and uphold common, fundamental moral principles. Stewardship includes the Duty to develop Character by educating, training, and inspiring all who serve to adhere to, internalize, and uphold the Army Ethic, as their own.
- 0-7. Rapid change in the nature of armed conflict presents ethical challenges to mission accomplishment. These include heretofore-unknown weapons and their application in the human domain. We must anticipate the ethical challenges associated with this uncertainty and be guided by our Army Ethic.

Trust is the foundation for success on every mission and in every team endeavor

WHERE DOES THE ARMY ETHIC COME FROM

0-8. Our Army Ethic has its origins in the philosophical heritage, theological traditions, and cultural and historical legacy that frame our Nation. We respect *life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness*, self-evident truths, expressed in the Declaration of Independence, as American values and universal rights.

In 1776, American leaders believed that it was not enough to win the war. They also had to win in a way that was consistent with the values of their society and the principles of their cause....American leaders resolved that the War of Independence would be conducted with a respect for human rights, even for the enemy.

David Hackett Fischer
Washington's Crossing

These principles are enshrined in the Preamble to the Constitution and our Bill of Rights

We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Preamble to the
Constitution of the United States

We swear by solemn oath to bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of the United States of America

0-9. Our National values and moral principles are reflected in legislation, the Uniform Code of Military Justice, treaties, status of forces agreements, the Law of Armed Conflict, our creeds, and mottos. By our Oath of service we commit ourselves to these time-honored and enduring ideals.

OUR ARMY HERITAGE

0-10. On June 14, 1775, the Continental Congress created our Army and gave us the mission to defend what would become the United States of America. The Revolutionary War produced a courageous response from the American people. There is no better example than at Valley Forge. Following the loss of Philadelphia in 1777, the American Army under General George Washington went into winter quarters. During the desperate days of Valley Forge, the Continental Army Soldiers were motivated and inspired by a common dream: liberty. The price of freedom was understood and the Soldiers at Valley Forge persevered. (<http://www.army.mil/article/20985/a-taste-of-valor/>)

0-11. In the Colonial Era, Americans regarded military service among the duties of citizenship. Today's Army Professionals, Soldiers and Army Civilians, maintain that tradition. We are dedicated to the Nation's defense and to the moral principles and values upon which it is founded. Our shared identity proceeds from our shared understanding of and respect for those whose legacy we celebrate. We honor this cherished inheritance in our customs, courtesies, ceremonies, and traditions. Units and organizations preserve their storied histories and proudly display distinctive emblems (regimental colors, crests, insignia, patches, and mottos). The campaign streamers on the Army flag remind us of our history of Honorable Service to the Nation. These symbols recall the sacrifice and preserve the bond with those who preceded us, express who we are today, and confirm our calling to serve. In that tradition, as Stewards of the Army, we dedicate our lives to preserve our liberty for generations to come.

SECTION II –OUR SHARED IDENTITY

TRUSTED ARMY PROFESSIONALS

0-12. We live by and uphold the Army Ethic, embracing our shared identity as Trusted Army Professionals. As such, we assume complementary roles as Honorable Servants in defense of the American people; Military Experts in the conduct of our mission; and faithful Stewards of our profession, our people, and the resources entrusted to our care. We are responsible for sustaining an Army culture of Trust, now and for the future. Living by and upholding the Army Ethic strengthens:

- Honorable Service through ethical, effective, and efficient accomplishment of the mission and performance of Duty
- Military Expertise in the ethical design, generation, support, and application of landpower
- Stewardship of our people and resources, now and for the future
- Esprit de Corps – “Our Winning Spirit”
- Professional development in Character, Competence, and Commitment
- Trust among Soldiers, Army Civilians, Army Families, and with the American people

OUR ROLES AND MORAL PRINCIPLES

0-13. By taking our solemn Oath of service, we voluntarily incur an extraordinary moral obligation inherent in the shared identity to which we aspire. Living by and upholding the Army Ethic requires that we honor moral principles in our decisions and actions, in all aspects of life.

HONORABLE SERVANTS OF THE NATION – PROFESSIONALS OF CHARACTER

We support and defend the Constitution, serve under civilian authority, obey the laws of the Nation and legal orders; and we reject and report illegal or immoral orders or actions.

0-14. We volunteer to bear true faith and allegiance to the supreme law of our land and to protect the freedoms it defines. This is clearly articulated in our Army Value of Loyalty. Allegiance is expressed in willing obedience to the lawful orders of our elected and appointed civilian leaders. We demonstrate “true faith” in leading by example, doing our Duty in taking right action to uphold the Army Ethic, rejecting orders in violation of law or our moral principles.

We take pride in honorably serving the Nation with integrity, demonstrating character in all aspects of our lives.

0-15. The Army Profession contributes Honorable Service to the American people, defending our freedom and rights as expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Our mission must be accomplished in the right way, in accordance with our Nation’s values. “American values affect every aspect of how U.S. forces fight and win.” [Department of the Army, FM 3-24, Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies (Washington, DC, 13 May 2014): 1-10.] The Army Ethic guides us and the profession, always. This is non-negotiable. We demonstrate the Army Value of Integrity as we make decisions and take actions that are consistent with the moral principles of the Army Ethic. To violate the Army Ethic is to break our sacred bond of Trust with each other and with those whom we serve. Failure to live by and uphold the Army Ethic brings discredit on us all and may have strategic implications for the mission.

In war and peace, we recognize the intrinsic dignity and worth of all people, treating them with empathy and respect.

0-16. As stated in the Declaration of Independence, our human rights to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness are inalienable and universal. Accordingly, we treat all people with Respect, recognizing their intrinsic dignity and worth, demonstrating empathy for all. Even those who threaten the rights of others are entitled to just and compassionate treatment according to law, regulations, and rules of engagement. We lead by example and do what is right to prevent abusive treatment of others. We protect those who are threatened or suffer disregard for their inherent dignity and worth. We do not tolerate mistreatment of people or their property.

We lead by example and demonstrate courage by doing what is right despite risk, uncertainty, and fear; we candidly express our professional judgment to subordinates, peers, and superiors.

0-17. Frequently our mission, our Duty, and life itself require that we accept risk. Our desired outcome, regardless of our decision-making, planning, and leadership is not assured. This observation applies, to some extent, in every endeavor. We realize that we may be harmed in performing our Duty and accomplishing the mission. The harm we fear may be physical, emotional, or spiritual. To carry on requires Courage, an attribute of our Character and an Army Value. We communicate with candor and tact, seeking shared understanding and demonstrate Courage, by doing what is right despite risk, uncertainty, and fear. A decision and action is right if it is ethical (consistent with the moral principles of the Army Ethic), effective (likely to accomplish its purpose, accepts prudent risk), and efficient (makes disciplined use of resources -- Stewardship).

MILITARY EXPERTS – COMPETENT PROFESSIONALS

We do our duty, leading and following with discipline, striving for excellence, putting the needs of others above our own, and accomplishing the mission as a team.

0-18. The Army Value of Duty confers responsibility to contribute our best efforts to accomplish the mission as members of the team. In performing our Duty, we make right decisions and take right actions to the best of our ability. This does not mean that we will always succeed or avoid all mistakes. Setbacks and error will occur in any human endeavor. We learn from experience, good and bad, develop in wisdom and leadership, and strive for excellence.

We commit to the mission and understand it may demand courageously risking our lives and justly killing others.

0-19. The Army mission includes the directive to “fight and win our Nation’s wars.” We must be equipped, trained, and ready to engage in armed conflict. Our basic human rights, affirmed in the Declaration of Independence and stated in law, must be defended. Our right to life includes the right and the responsibility of self-defense. The legitimate interests of the American people, as determined by our freely elected government, must be protected when threatened or attacked. Our missions may justly require the use of armed force against legitimate threats, consistent with the Army Ethic. We recognize that our lives, and the lives and well-being of others are at risk. In the “fog of war” uncertainty compromises situational understanding. Regardless, to the best of our ability, we must make decisions and take actions that are right. We understand there may be unanticipated, unintended consequences affecting the lives of innocent people and their property. We do all we can to avoid these effects. We accept prudent risk and with Courage we accomplish the mission in the right way.

We advance the expertise of our chosen profession by seeking the truth through life-long learning, professional development and certification.

0-20. Within the Army Profession, progressive development and certification in Character, Competence, and Commitment, for Soldiers and Army Civilians, is a continuous, life-long responsibility. Knowledge, discipline, and leadership require education, training, experience, coaching, counseling, and mentoring.

Situational understanding requires our individual and collective wisdom and judgment, often under demanding, chaotic circumstances, to discern what is actually so -- the truth. With shared understanding and intent we evaluate our options, decide what is right, and work as a cohesive team to accomplish the mission.

STEWARDS OF THE ARMY PROFESSION – COMMITTED PROFESSIONALS

We embrace and uphold the Army Values and standards of the profession, always accountable to each other and the American people for our decisions and actions.

0-21. Every Soldier and Army Civilian is simultaneously a leader, follower, and Steward of the Army Profession. We are accountable to the American people to accomplish the mission in the right way. We accept responsibility for making right decisions and taking right actions, always. We hold ourselves and others accountable to achieve the standard, striving for excellence. All of us exemplify life-long commitment to defend the American people and secure the National interest by performing our Duty consistent with Army Values. We stand strong to uphold the Army Ethic and conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of our professional status.

We wisely use the resources entrusted to us, ensuring our Army is well led and well prepared, while caring for Soldiers, Army Civilians, and Families.

0-22. We are diligent and faithful guardians of the people and resources entrusted to our care. The privilege to lead includes the responsibility to professionally develop our subordinates. We teach, coach, counsel, and mentor; and willingly accept such guidance from others. We develop people and organizations -- properly equipped and trained -- led by Trusted Army Professionals of Character, Competence, and Commitment. We are ready for the mission today and anticipate the challenges that lie ahead. We exercise discipline in our use of materiel, facilities, and funds. We promote and safeguard the health and welfare of our Soldiers, Army Civilians, and their Families.

We continuously strengthen the essential characteristics of the profession, reinforcing the bond of trust with the American people.

0-23. Our Army's history confirms that well-led, disciplined organizations, embracing shared identity and purpose succeed as a team. By striving for excellence, with indomitable winning spirit, we strengthen the Army Profession. With commitment and resilience, we persevere through adversity and challenges -- as individuals and as teams. As we consistently accomplish the mission in the right way, we reinforce the foundation of our relationship with the American people -- Trust.

ARMY CULTURE OF TRUST

0-24. The Army culture is a trusted, safe environment where all members of the Army Family can develop and enjoy the "blessings of liberty." Preservation of the peace is inherent to our *ethos* -- this is *Why We Serve*.

0-25. Our Army's role as a component of the Joint Force is in the domain of landpower. Our enduring responsibility is to equip, train, and be ready for a wide-variety of missions, as directed by the civilian and military chain-of-command. The ethical, effective, and efficient accomplishment of the mission is the core of our *ethos* -- this is *How We Serve*.

0-26. We accomplish the mission as a team, Soldiers and Army Civilians, contributing our best effort, doing what is right to the best of our ability, and always striving for excellence. Leaders set the right example, uphold Army standards, establish a positive climate, and inspire the team. While the senior leader is responsible for what the team does or fails to do, success demands that all perform Duty with

discipline and to standard. In this way, leaders and followers are trusted teammates in the exercise of mission command. The consistent demonstration of Character, Competence, and Commitment, with shared understanding and intent, reinforces mutual trust and builds cohesive teams.

The Army is a way of life within an enduring culture of trust

SECTION III –EXPECTATIONS

EXPECTATIONS FOR ARMY PROFESSIONALS

0-27. The Army Ethic motivates and inspires our shared identity as Trusted Army Professionals: Honorable Servants of the American people; Military Experts in defense of the Nation; and faithful Stewards of the people and resources entrusted to our care. Living by and upholding the Army Ethic is our life-long commitment. Reinforcing Trust requires continuous professional development in Character, Competence, and Commitment. This quest is a Duty consistent with our shared identity. When our Soldiers and Army Civilians return to society as private citizens, they continue to be moral-ethical exemplars for their Families and American communities. In many ways Veterans of Honorable Service and Army Retirees are “Soldiers for Life” and continue to contribute to the well-being of the United States of America.

SOLDIERS AND ARMY CIVILIANS BOUND IN COMMON MORAL PURPOSE

0-28. Living the Army Ethic is a commitment and an expectation. Specifically, the Army Ethic informs, motivates, and inspires Army Professionals to:

- Seek to discover the truth, decide what is right (ethical, effective, and efficient), and demonstrate the Character, Competence, and Commitment to act accordingly.
- Contribute Honorable Service in the conduct of the mission, performance of Duty, and all aspects of life.
- Stand Strong as Stewards of the Army Profession to uphold the Army Ethic -- prevent misconduct and do what is right to stop unethical practices.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE ARMY PROFESSION

0-29. The Army Ethic guides institutional and operational policy and practice in the ethical design, generation, support and application of landpower, under legitimate civilian authority, on behalf of the American people. The relationship between the Army Profession and the American people depends on Trust, continuously reinforced through contribution of Honorable Service, Military Expertise, and Stewardship. The commitment of the Army Profession to fulfill this Duty is demonstrated with indomitable Esprit de Corps – “Winning Spirit” – and the ability to be always ready and resilient.

INSTITUTIONAL AND OPERATIONAL POLICY AND PRACTICE REFLECT THE ARMY ETHIC

0-30. The moral principles of the Army Ethic are inherent within our culture of Trust. Specifically, the Army Ethic informs and guides institutional and operational policy and practice supporting:

- Honorable Service in defense of the Constitution and the interests of the American people.
- Military Expertise to accomplish the mission in the right way (ethically, effectively, and efficiently).
- Stewardship of Soldiers, Army Civilians, the Army Family, and our resources.
- Certification of Army Professionals in Character, Competence, and Commitment.
- Our shared identity as Trusted Army Professionals and our bond of Trust with the American people.

SECTION IV –SUMMARY

THE ARMY ETHIC

0-31. The Army Ethic embraces American values expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. It defines the nature of *Honorable Service* for Army Professionals and guides the Army Profession in the ethical design, generation, support, and application of landpower. It informs regulations, policies, doctrine, programs, systems, practices, and procedures.

0-32. The Army Ethic inspires our shared identity as *Trusted Army Professionals: Honorable Servants* of the American people, *Military Experts* in defense of the Nation, and faithful *Stewards* of the people and resources entrusted to our care. Living by and upholding the Army Ethic reinforces mutual Trust within the profession and with the American people.

0-33. The Army Ethic is expressed as follows:

**The Army Ethic
The Heart of the Army**

The Army Ethic defines the moral principles that are the basis for our mutual trust with the American people, guiding the Army throughout its history of Honorable Service to the Nation. The Army Ethic binds us with those who led the way, guides the Army Profession, and inspires each of us in the conduct of our missions, performance of duty, and at all times. It expresses our commitment to uphold the Army's Motto:

This We'll Defend.

Army Professionals fulfill distinctive roles as Honorable Servants, Military Experts, and Stewards of our profession. By our solemn oath of service we voluntarily incur the extraordinary moral obligation to be:

Trusted Army Professionals

Honorable Servants of the Nation – Professionals of Character:

We support and defend the Constitution, serve under civilian authority, obey the laws of the Nation and legal orders; and we reject and report illegal or immoral orders or actions.

We take pride in honorably serving the Nation with integrity, demonstrating character in all aspects of our lives.

In war and peace, we recognize the intrinsic dignity and worth of all people, treating them with empathy and respect.

We lead by example and demonstrate courage by doing what is right despite risk, uncertainty, and fear; we candidly express our professional judgment to subordinates, peers, and superiors.

Military Experts – Competent Professionals:

We do our duty, leading and following with discipline, striving for excellence, putting the needs of others above our own, and accomplishing the mission as a team.

We commit to the mission and understand it may demand courageously risking our lives and justly killing others.

We advance the expertise of our chosen profession by seeking the truth through life-long learning, professional development, and certification.

Stewards of the Army Profession – Committed Professionals:

We embrace and uphold the Army Values and standards of the profession, always accountable to each other and the American people for our decisions and actions.

We wisely use the resources entrusted to us, ensuring our Army is well led and well prepared, while caring for Soldiers, Army Civilians, and Families.

We continuously strengthen the essential characteristics of the profession, reinforcing our bond of trust with the American people.